



INFORMATION LINK

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A source of information for our customers

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Enterprise Architecture: A Blueprint for the Future

Jennifer Witham

"An overall plan for designing, implementing and maintaining the infrastructure to support the enterprises business functions and underlying networks and systems."

- National Association of State CIOs
Enterprise Architecture Development Tool-Kit
November 2001

Last year when ITD was forming their 2001 Strategic Business Plan, a major issue identified was the lack of a formal technical architecture definition. In the past year we started exploring best practices for the development of a statewide Enterprise Architecture (EA) solution. In November, ITD entered into a service agreement with META Group, Inc. to assist with the design and implementation of this highly collaborative effort.

The success of this process will depend greatly not only on the strength of cross-agency partnerships, but also the creation of a common vision that allows for the balance between agency autonomy and the need for a shared infrastructure. The process will be formally kicked off after the first of the year – so stayed tuned for more good things to come!



Network Update

Jerry Fossum

Introducing North Dakota StageNet

Since the legislature mandated a common network for government and education in the state, we have been using the term statewide network. This term is perceived differently by different groups. We have been searching for a descriptive name to provide an identity for the network and have settled on StageNet. It is an acronym for **Statewide Technology Access for Government and Education Network**. It also ties to our frontier heritage where the stagecoach was the primary means of information delivery. You will be hearing and seeing the name often.

Low Cost Network Access

Since the implementation of StageNet, we have been working to provide a lower bandwidth network connection that would be less expensive than a T-1 connection. We have been working with Dakota Carrier Network and the local telephone companies to get Digital Subscriber Line (DSL) connections that access StageNet. We currently offer DSL connections in Bismarck, Fargo, Grand Forks, and the SRT Communications service area. We will be adding the capability in other local telephone company service areas in the near future. Our goal is to have the ability to provide a DSL connection to StageNet wherever a local telephone company offers DSL service.

Video Conferencing on StageNet

Currently, over 120 video sites are connected to StageNet. There are 60 H.320 sites from the original IVN, 25 fully certified H.323 sites and the rest are H.323 sites in the process of being certified.

The certification process is extremely important in order to maintain the integrity and video quality of the network. We have found that strict requirements are necessary to maintain good quality video and to be able to support a large number of video conference centers. Uncertified video sites will not be supported.

State Telephone Directory

Selina Smith

ITD would like to remind everyone that the State Telephone Directory is no longer being published in a paper format. The directory has been available on-line since August 2000. There are 4 different access routes from the North Dakota Portal (www.discovernd.com).

1. On the home page, click on "Government" and then the "State Telephone Directory" bullet.
2. Click on "Contact Us" in the upper right corner on the home page. Click on the "State Government Directory" bullet.
3. In the message near the bottom of the page indicating "If you can not find something,...", click on the "Telephone" option to link to the directory.
4. In fine print at the bottom of the home page, click on the "Contact Us" option. This will appear at the bottom of all portal pages.

The public URL address is: <http://lnotes.state.nd.us/directory>

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If your agency has changed editors, please contact Selina Smith at (701)328-4475 or ssmith@state.nd.us with the editor's full name, including middle initial, phone number, and e-mail address. In order to edit your site, the editor must have an e-mail address to connect to the link. If you have any questions, please contact me.

The PC Replacement Cycle Dilemma

Phil 'Boris' Miller, CCP



A common challenge faced by all deliverers of personal computer (PC) support services lies in the determination of when to replace aging equipment. The traditional solution has been in the form of a replacement cycle based upon a set number of years, often in the range of two to six years.

Solving the equation locally has been based upon diverse elements such as the timing of the obsolescence of technology used, the culture of the organization, the political and negotiation skills of the PC support staff, the support of senior management, and ultimately, the funds appropriated. Lack of resources is a common excuse preventing more scientific approaches to the PC replacement puzzle.

The result of the traditional replacement tactics has required PC staff to support a variety of hardware and software. This variety can cause compatibility problems that require labor-intensive solutions and training issues. Enterprise management issues are compounded by the array of local diversity. Enterprise solutions call for standards based upon studies of Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) as reflected by internal and external environments.

Recently, TCO has expanded to include both direct and indirect costs and the additional effects brought about by such elements as expanding Internet bandwidth requirements, web hosting requirements, mobile computing and remote access, security and virus protection needs, privacy issues, and transition costs.

The complexity of making a rational determination about TCO is increased beyond simple mathematics because PCs and related technology costs are integral to business and not easily isolated. The PC replacement cycle issue is much greater than simply pricing out current PC hardware costs and projecting them into the future. TCO is actually many times the capital cost of the PC itself.

Enterprise Resource Planning

Mike Ressler

During the 2001 Legislative Session, Information Technology Department received \$7,500,000 to purchase and implement an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system. This system will provide State Government, Higher Education, and K-12 institutions with an integrated financial administration, human resource, and student information system.

An RFP was issued on September 18, 2000 with proposals due by November 17, 2000. Six vendors submitted proposals: Great Plains, Jenzabar, Oracle, PeopleSoft, Systems Applications & Processing (SAP), and Systems and Computer Training Corporation (SCT). An evaluation team was created with representatives from K-12, higher education, and State government. After reviewing the proposals, the evaluation team eliminated Great Plains, Jenzabar, and SAP. Shortly after, Great Plains was purchased by Microsoft and proposed a co-development initiative with the State. This was appealing to the State from an economic development standpoint and we decided to explore this opportunity.

From April through October of 2001, the evaluation team worked closely with Microsoft/Great Plains. After a thorough investigation, both parties agreed it would take six years to develop and integrate a system of this size. Because of the dire need for this system, it was agreed by all to return to the original procurement process. The evaluation team agreed to remove SCT and begin a final review of the Oracle and PeopleSoft products.

This process started in December with an analysis of matching the functional requirements for each of the two vendor's products. We will conduct hands-on demonstrations, receive a "best and final" offer, draft a contract, and select the winning vendor by late January/early February. The plan is to have the Higher Education applications done first and implement the majority of Higher Education's system by June 2003. The State and K-12 portion of the system will follow.

An ERP executive committee with representation from the Governor's Office, the Legislature, Higher Education, and the Office of Management and Budget will be created to oversee the project.

ITD EMPLOYEE PROFILE

Name: Tim DeGraff

Job Title: Telecommunications Analyst III

Section of ITD: Telecommunications

Job Responsibilities: Supervise the analysts responsible for the statewide area network. We provide WAN connectivity to all State government agencies, political subdivisions, K-12 schools, and higher education facilities encompassing 193 cities and roughly 440 unique sites around North Dakota. We ensure network connections among these four groups and to the Internet at large. We also provide site certification and guaranteed bandwidth for h.323 IP video conferencing across the network.

Years at ITD: 6 years



Software Development News

Vern Welder

GIS Data Hub

Bob Nutsch, ITD's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Coordinator, and the ND Geographic Information Systems Technical Committee have been busy planning the implementation of a statewide GIS data hub. The hub will be a centralized repository for sharing GIS data.

Consulting assistance for the GIS Data Hub Project is provided by Schlumberger/Sema. The preliminary project plan states that a prototype will be completed in mid February of 2002 and a pilot data hub will be rolled out in late May. The State Water Commission, the Department of Transportation, and the Health Department have volunteered to be pilot agencies for the data hub. Their data will be the first to be hosted on the hub.

For more details, contact Bob Nutsch at bnutsch@state.nd.us or (701)328-3212.



New ITD Location

ITD's Software Development Division hired 19 software developers during the July – December 2001 timeframe. Our offices were filled beyond capacity until December 14 when our Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) project team moved to the newly completed ND Association of Counties (NDAoCo) Building. Human Services resources committed to the HIPAA project are located with our developers.

The NDAoCo building is located at 1661 Capitol Way in Bismarck. ITD will occupy the basement office space. Our plan is to host large project teams there, since it works very well to locate customers with ITD project teams.

Small Systems Development

The ITD Software Development Division now offers Small Systems Development services. We will develop small MS-Access applications and web pages that access a MS-Access database via Active Server Pages. This service will be offered for applications that have a maximum of five users. MS-Access applications should be hosted locally on the agency LAN.

We currently have one developer allocated to small systems development. We plan to expand the service if demand dictates. The systems analyst and programming rates for small systems development are our regular systems development rates.

Project Management Office

In March 2001 ITD Software Development Division created a Project Management Office whose function is to maintain and enforce a project management methodology and a software development methodology. Dave Eckenrode manages our Project Management Office. Dave has established a project management methodology and implemented it on eight major projects. Dave has also implemented a Lotus Notes application that records and distributes project information such as meeting minutes, action items, issues, impact of project changes, and status reports. The entire project team uses the Lotus Notes application as a communications tool and for tracking events and responsibilities.

The Project Management Office concept is giving our division more credibility, since it requires a formal project management process that provides better tracking and communication of project information.

For more details, contact Dave Eckenrode at deckenrode@state.nd.us or (701)328-7388.

Request Cost Estimates Early

IT Plans for the 2003 – 2005 biennium are due on March 15, 2002. ITD Software Development receives many requests for cost estimates just before the IT Plan deadline. Our cost estimates are more accurate when we have adequate time and if the right people are available to do them. Therefore, we ask agencies to be more proactive and request their cost estimates early to avoid delays and to receive more accurate estimates. Please try to request these cost estimates by February 4, 2002.

Out With The Old, In With The New: The New Appropriate Use Policy

Dirk Huggett

One of the things done by most of us as a new year approaches is to review what happened in the past and try to plan our future.

A short time ago ITD was asked to review the policies the State was using for Internet Usage. Many agencies have some form of policy for the appropriate use of the Internet, but there was no specific directive for agencies to have a policy nor what should be included in it.

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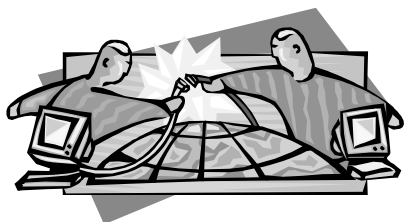
So ITD began researching the issue. We reviewed policies used by universities in the US and Canada, businesses, other states, and many of the existing agency usage policies. One key item discovered was that most usage policies were just extensions of common Human Resource (HR) policies dealing with harassment and civil rights.

With that in mind, ITD, in collaboration with Central Personnel, the Attorney General's Office, and the Governor's Office, set out to develop a standard baseline policy that each agency can use. The policy covers the use of all Electronic Communication Devices (ECDs), including telephone, fax machines, and computers. Agencies may enforce stricter rules, but this policy would ensure that agency usage policies provide essential coverage in key areas.

One of the driving factors in creating this policy was to give all users of the State's IT systems a clear set of guidelines and expectations. The policy does allow for personal use of ECDs if certain guidelines are met. Again, individual agencies may take a stricter interpretation of this, i.e. not allowing personal use at any time. A set of standards of conduct were also provided covering not only the HR issues noted above, but also areas such as unauthorized access, copyright infringement, illegal activities, and virus protection.

Finally, the policy recommends training in appropriate usage and clearly identifies the State's right to measure and monitor usage.

The team that developed the policy hopes this baseline policy will help protect the State and those who use the State's network. The policy can be found at www.state.nd.us/itd/planning/policies.html under Security. If you have any questions, please contact your HR personnel or Ardy Pfaff at ITD.



ITD Executive Management

Curtis Wolfe, *Chief Information Officer*

Mike Ressler, *Director of Operations*

Nancy Walz, *Associate Director of IT Planning*

Dan Sipes, *Associate Director of Administrative Services*

Vern Welder, *Associate Director of Software Development Services*

Dean Glatt, *Associate Director of Computer Services*

Jerry Fossum, *Associate Director of Telecommunication Services*

INFORMATION LINK is published quarterly by the North Dakota Information Technology Department. Contact the editor if you are interested in contributing information or would like to be added to the mailing list.

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